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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8841
INFO RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4751
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 6217
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ 5328
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3458
RUEHQH/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2213
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4207
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 6076
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN 1271
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6867
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO 1304
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3679
RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 6604
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 9793
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 4311

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SUBJECT: EARTH DAY PHOTO CONTEST ATTRACTS OVER 1,500 PICS FROM ALL
OVER BRAZIL

¶1. SUMMARY: The US Embassy in Brasilia, through its Regional Environmental HUB Office and with indispensable support from the Public Affairs section, celebrated Earth Day 2007 through a countrywide photography contest entitled 'A Snapshot of Brazilian Nature.' With over 1,500 entries from throughout Brazil, this program reached a very large segment of the Brazilian population and allowed post to highlight US environmental engagement throughout the country. We believe this high visibility, low-cost program could become a Department best practice and encourage OES to adopt it for international distribution next year. END SUMMARY.

¶2. With over 1,500 entries from more than 130 cities across the country, and all but two states, (Amapa and Roraima), this Earth Day contest had one of the highest visibilities and reaches of any outreach program conducted by the mission over the last year. The Public Affairs section and Regional Environmental Hub worked closely in conducting the public outreach necessary to achieve this level of participation in Brazil including writing and distributing press releases, conducting media interviews throughout the country highlighting the contest, and making individual efforts to speak directly with NGOs, academic institutions, and other potential partners. In addition, the Hub and Public Affairs developed an Earth Day op-ed from the Ambassador that was printed in over 10 media outlets, and reached hundreds of thousands of readers.

¶3. The Grand Prize winner - Lucas Landau, age 17, from Rio de Janeiro - received an airline ticket to Florida, courtesy of American Airlines, and a Kodak EasyShare digital camera. The HUB office is arranging the logistics for Lucas to visit the Everglades National Park during his stay in the U.S. and will use this opportunity to highlight the on-going work post is doing to support the Everglades-Pantanal Sister Parks Agreement signed in 1997. In addition to the grand prize winner, there were three winners in each age group category (10-15, 16-20, 21-25, and 26-30) who received a coffee table book on the environment and a certificate signed by Ambassador Clifford Sobel.

¶4. The Earth Day event was capped off by an award ceremony at the Casa Thomas Jefferson (bi-national center) in Brasilia on April 23rd. Five of the winners, including the Grand Prize winner, attended the event hosted by Ambassador Sobel. In addition, the event honored a group of Special Education students from CESAS, a school located near the Embassy compound. Fourteen students from CESAS, most of which are visually or audibly impaired, sent in

pictures of nature for the contest. The Embassy awarded the school with a certificate of Honorable Mention, a book on the Grand Canyon for the school library and other books for each participant.

¶15. The response from the community as well as from NGOs, academic institutions, and our contacts in the Government of Brazil has been overwhelmingly positive. Due to this response, the Public Affairs section and the Hub have developed a program for a traveling exhibit of winning photographs to other bi-national centers and will create a calendar for possible use as our annual end of year gratuity to our contacts.

¶16. The Regional Environmental Hub Office will create a "How to Guide" for developing a similar program in other countries and will make this available to OES for possible inclusion as a best practice for other posts next year.

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